

# Target Needs of English for University Education and English Textbooks up to Class XII: An Evaluation

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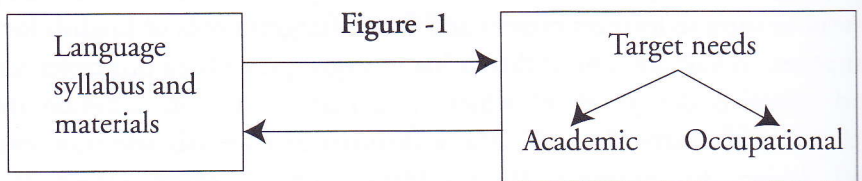
English courses and textbooks are meant to cater to learners' academic and professional needs of English. However, this does not seem to happen in Bangladesh; university students in the country appear to have difficulties in reading their text and reference books in English. The present English syllabuses, and materials up to class XII do not seem to prepare them for the amount and level of reading skills they need for a meaningful university education, which means quality education that helps graduates acquire the best possible knowledge and prepares them for the job market of today's globalized world and not somehow to pass examinations and obtain a certificate in different areas of study in the present world. A lack seems to exist between the levels of English language proficiency needed for higher education, and the level English courses and materials up to class XII help them attain. This paper examines the nature of this lack, and recommends measures to fill it.

Since the beginning of the communicative movement, relating courses and materials to learners' needs has become the major thrust in English Language Teaching (ELT). Communicative syllabus and materials design was meant to cater to learners present and future (target) needs of English for various purposes. A vast amount of theory has emerged prescribing principles for course and materials design, all of which have many things in common including 'relation with learners' needs'. Many theorists of materials selection, evaluation and design, for example, Byrd (1995), Cunningsworth (1984 & 1995),

McDonough and Shaw (1997), Sheldon (1988), Tomlinson, (1998), and Richards (1993) among others, provide a checklist that includes points like layout, balance of activities, balance of skills, practice opportunities, relation to learners' needs and levels, providing roughly tuned input, interesting and motivating, tasks/activities for learners, varieties in activities, and having culturally unbiased and interesting content, relating materials to learners' learning styles and learning strategies, and incorporating recent theories of language and language learning (e.g. 'learning a language is learning to mean', and 'learning to communicate', 'learning by doing', 'discovery learning' etc.) in the materials. These are some of the major points usually taken into consideration for designing, selecting and evaluating materials.

This paper, however, takes a different perspective; it draws upon Munby's (1978) 'purposive domain', and Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) ideas of 'target needs', 'necessities', and 'lacks', and considers meeting the requirements of university level education as one of the major 'purposive domains' for textbooks up to class XII, the other being the occupational requirements after the university degree(s). The paper takes the first, the EAP (English for Academic Purposes) as its point of reference and examines how well English text books up to class XII meet the requirements of English for university education in Bangladesh. Even within EAP, the study takes only reading skills as its focus for evaluating the books; the other skills are excluded, though they are also important. Moreover, the section on lacks in levels of English is not fully developed in this paper because it needs the space of a complete paper.

It is now well established that English course and materials should be designed to cater to learners' needs, both general and specific. It is important to analyze what Munby (op.cit.) describes as 'purposive domains' which includes needs of English for both academic and occupational purposes in a particular context. In the Munby model, specifying target needs is an important pre-requisite for course and materials design. To determine learning objectives and contents of courses, analysis of these target needs is essential. Course and materials design, therefore, should follow a model like the one in Figure 1 below:

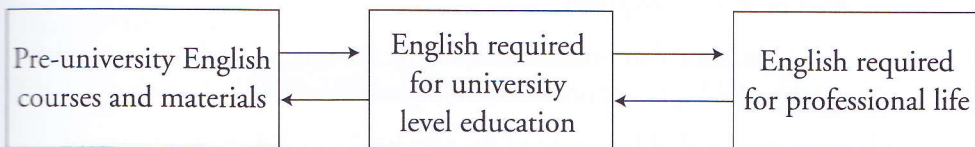




The target needs for academic purposes should be the English language proficiency required for higher education, both general and technical, and that for occupational purposes should be the competence required for effective performance in different professions, for example, as engineers, doctors, teachers, bureaucrats, businessmen, nurses, office clerks, secretaries and the like.

Materials designers should determine what amount and level of English are required for university education, and English courses and materials from class I to class XII, should prepare learners for those target needs accordingly. The entire education program of a country, therefore, may be divided into two major stages: (1) pre-university stage, and (2) University stage. Objectives of the pre-university English courses and materials should be to prepare learners for the challenges of university academic programmes, and university programmes should prepare them for professional life. The requirements of the professional life should, therefore, be set as the target for university English courses, and the English required for meaningful university education should be the target set for pre-university English courses. There always will be some challenge when students move from one level of education to the next higher level, but if the challenge is too big and unmanageable; the standard of education is bound to suffer. The challenge should not be more than  $i+1$  (Krashen, 1981). The pre-university courses should set this as its important goal. The model for course and materials design up to class XII should, therefore, be like the one in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2



In Bangladesh, materials are not designed with these ideas in mind. Materials up to class XII are basically EGP (English for General Purposes) in nature, with no emphasis on learners' EAP and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes) needs of learners. There does not seem to be any link between the level and amount of English in the pre-university courses and those required for undergraduate level studies, both at home and abroad.

One major problem for Bangladesh is that the present generation of university students in the country does not seem to have the level of reading competence required for a meaningful higher education of an international

standard in today's increasingly globalizing world. The standard of education in the country is, therefore, suffering badly. The question is: Why is this happening?

Another very pertinent question in this respect is: are not the English courses and materials up to class XII preparing learners adequately undergraduate level studies? This basic question is taken as the yardstick to evaluate the textbooks up to class XII.

For the purpose, it is important to examine the amount and level of reading English courses and materials up to class XII provide, and the amount and level of reading competence required for effective higher education in the country to find out if there is any lack between the amount and level of English at pre-university level English courses and requirements of English for university education. This paper tries to examine both with reference to some studies done in the country and with a survey done recently by the author himself.

The paper examines the available library resources of the country and university syllabuses and textbooks of different subjects to examine the amount and level of reading skills required for higher education. The paper also examines the amount and level of English provided by materials up to class XII, and then compares the amount and level provided up to class XII and those required for university education. To be more specific, the study

- i) examines syllabuses of different disciplines at the higher level, to see the number of text and reference books, and thereby, the amount and level of reading required.
- ii) examines library information to see the amount of reading required for meaningful higher education in Bangladesh.
- iii) examines level of language of the text books in different subjects of undergraduate programmes.
- iv) analyses the English textbooks up to class XII to see the amount and level of English they help learners attain, and
- v) compares no. iv with nos. i, ii and iii above.



The next section of the paper presents some of the findings on the topic.

**The Study:**

**Amount of Reading needed for the university level:**

**(a) Data from Syllabus Analysis**

Analysis of syllabuses of a number of undergraduate programmes of different disciplines of study shows that most of the text/reference books in most of the disciplines are in English. The data of syllabus analysis is presented in Table 1:

<b>Table 1</b>											
<b>Amount of Reading Required for University Level Education as Found from Syllabus Analysis</b>											
Institute	No. of Depts	Undergraduate					Graduate				
		Books	English	%	Bangla	%	Books	English	%	Bangla	%
DU	17	4439	4079	91.89	360	7.11	1892	1839	97.2	53	2.8
RU	37	10696	8893	83.14	1803	16.86	3949	3547	89.89	402	10.11
Agr. U	7	2217	2182	98.42	35	1.58	1061	1052	99.15	9	0.85
AH Col Ed.	13	2281	1915	83.95	366	16.05	1313	1155	87.96	158	12.04
Col	12	2126	1765	83.01	361	16.99	1238	1225	98.95	13	1.05
Total	88	21759	18825	86.52	2934	13.48	9453	8818	93.28	635	6.72

*Source of Data: Haque (1996)*

[For details about the Departments, see Appendix 1]

It is seen from the data that of the 21,759 books recommended in the undergraduate syllabuses of the 88 departments in 4 public universities and two government colleges, of a total number of 21759 books 18,825, i.e. 86.52 percent books are in English, and of the 9453 books recommended in the syllabuses for graduate level, 8818, i.e. 93.28 percent books are in English. This suggests that a lot of reading in English is required for both undergraduate and graduate levels in the country.

<sup>1</sup>In table 1 the abbreviations used are as follows: DU= Dhaka University, RU= Rajshahi University, AGR. Uni= Agriculture University, Mymensingh, AH Col= Govt. Azizul Haque College, Bogra, Ed. col= Govt. Edward College,



In a survey, Haque (2006) finds that undergraduate students in Bangladesh are required to read 90 text/reference books in English on an average in the four years of their Honours programme, and the average number of pages in each book is 250, which means that undergraduate students have to read 22,500 pages in four years, that means 5,625 pages of English texts every year, which is a lot of reading. Even if students read 25% of these texts, the total number of pages to be read in a year would be 1,406. The scenario is presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2				
Average no. of books to be read in 4 years	Average no. of pages in the books	Total no of pages to be read in 4 years	Number of pages to be read in a year	25% of the texts
90	250	22,500	5,625	1,405.5

**(b) Amount of reading skills in english as seen from library information**

*(I) Amount of reading as suggested by library information*

Information about available library resources in the country also suggests that a extensive reading in English is required for university education in Bangladesh. The data presented in Table 3 below presents a clear picture of the library resources of the country.

Table 3										
Library Information of the Major Universities										
Inst/Univ	Books					Journals				
	Total No.	English	%	Bangla	%	Total No.	English	%	Bangla	%
DU	600000	405668	67.61	194332	32.39	73500	65662	89.34	7838	10.66
RU	274586	198982	72.47	75604	27.53	36290	35582	98.05	708	1.95
AGr. U	141321	120282	85.11	21039	14.89	35577	33248	93.45	2329	6.55
BUET	117718	92887	78.91	24831	21.09	15143	13587	89.72	1556	10.28
Med. Col	18500	17400	94.05	1100	5.95	2000	1345	67.25	655	32.75
Ed. Col	25516	14132	55.38	11384	44.62	420	227	54.05	193	45.95
AH Col	20639	10555	51.15	10084	48.86	550	360	65.45	190	34.55
Total	1198280	859846	71.76	338434	28.24	163480	150011	91.76	13469	8.24

Source of Data: Haque (2006)



The data shows that the percentages of books in English in Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Mymensingh Agriculture University, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Edward College and Azizul Haque College libraries are 67.61, 72.47, 85.11, 78.91, 94.05, 55.38, and 51.15, and the percentages of journals in these institutes are 89.3, 98.0, 98.1, 93.9, 67.3, 54.0, and 65.5, respectively. [It is noteworthy that the percentage is significantly higher in the universities than in the colleges]. In all these institutions, of the total number of 11, 98, 280 books, 8,59,846, i.e. 71.76 percent are in English, and of the 1,63,480 copies of different journals, 1,50,011, i.e. 91.76 percent are in English. The data suggests that extensive reading in English is required for meaningful higher education in the country.

**(II) Seminar Library Information:**

Resources in the seminar libraries in the country also present a similar picture. The data from Haque's (2006) study, presented in Table 4 below, shows that the materials in the seminar libraries also are mostly in English.

**Table 4**

**Seminar Library Information**

Inst/Univ	Books					Journals				
	Total No.	English	%	Bangla	%	Total No.	English	%	Bangla	%
DU	99849	94664	94.81	5185	5.19	10415	8339	80.07	2076	19.93
RU	71551	50858	71.08	20065	28.92	15018	13570	90.36	1448	9.64
BUET	46485	45282	97.41	1203	2.59	5459	5459	100.0	00	00
Agr.Uni	22255	20900	93.91	1355	6.09	6860	6850	99.85	10	0.15
Ed. Col	24618	6426	26.10	18192	73.90	144	50	34.72	94	65.28
AHCol	6471	3055	47.21	3416	52.79	107	76	71.03	31	28.97
Total	271329	221189	81.52	50140	18.48	38003	34345	90.37	3370	9.63

*Source of Data: Haque (1996)*

The data from seminar libraries of sixteen Departments of Dhaka University, thirty departments of Rajshahi University, ten departments of BUET, three departments of Mymensingh Agriculture university, twelve departments of Edward College, Pabna, and nine departments of Azizul Haque College, Bogra show that there are 2, 71,329 books of which 2,21,189 i.e.

81.52 percent are in English, and of the 38,003 copies of journals in these seminar libraries, 34,345 , i.e. 90.37 percent are in English. The institution-wise percentages of books in Dhaka, Rajshahi, BUET, and Agriculture Universities, and in Azizul Haque College, and Edward College are 94.81, 71.08, 97.41, 93.91, 26.10, 47.21, and that of journals are 80.07, 90.36, 100.00, 99.85, 34.72, and 71.03, respectively. It is noteworthy that the percentage is significantly higher in universities than in colleges. The data suggests conclusively that a lot of reading in English is required for university education in Bangladesh.

**(c) Amount of reading provided up to class XII:**

In contrast, up to class XII, students read about 500 pages in twelve years. The break-up is as follows:

<b>Table 5</b>		
<b>Amount of reading provided up to class XII</b>		
<b>Level</b>	<b>Total no of pages</b>	<b>No. of pages a year</b>
I-V (in five years)	133 pages	27 pages
VI-X	254 pages	51 pages
XI-XII	113	56.5 pages

<b>Table 6</b>	
<b>Class-wise break up of the amount of reading up to class XII:</b>	
<b>Level</b>	<b>Total no. of pages (texts/passages)</b>
Class I	09
Class II	10
Class III	29
Class IV	37
Class V	48
Class VI	42
Class VII	52
Class VIII	58
Classes IX-X	102
Classes XI-XII	113
Total	500



If we divide the total number of pages read up to class XII by twelve, we see that students, on an average, read about forty two pages a year.

**Lack or Gap:**

In Table 2 (p.4) above, it was found that students are required to read at least 1406 pages of English from their text and reference books a year, and from Table 6 (p. 6) above, it we saw that students read only 500 pages in twelve years, i.e. forty two pages a year. From Hutchinson and Waters (1987), we know that lack = target requirement – present level. Thus students’ lack in Bangladesh is  $1406 - 42 = 1364$  pages. The picture is presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7		
Comparison of amount of reading required and done		
Amount of Reading for undergraduate level	Amount of reading done up to Class XII	Lack
At least 1,406 pages a year	42 pages a year	1364 pages a year

So a student who has read only 42 pages a year, and a total of 500 pages up to class XII, has to read 5,622, or at least 1,406 pages a year and 5,622 pages in four years

**Present and Target Levels of Reading and the Lack as Found in Tasmin (2001)**

The present and target levels of reading and the lack of the students of English Department at Rajshahi University were examined by Tasmin (2001) through questionnaire survey and interviews with teachers and students. The study shows that for all the nineteen items surveyed for reading skills, the target requirements are quite high, but the present levels are very low, and there is a significant lack in all the items. A 5 point rating scale was used for both the questionnaire survey and interviews with teachers and students, and the values assigned were as follows: (a) for studying present level, 1= bad, 2= below average, 3=good, 4= very good, 5=Excellent command, and for studying required level, they were as follows: 1= Seldom required, 2= sometimes required, 3=often required, 4= very often required, and 5= always required. The mean scores were interpreted as follows: (a) for target level, 1.00 to 1.99=low requirement, 2.00 to 2.99=rather high, 3.00 to 3.99=high, 4.00 to 4.99= very high, 5.00=excellent (b) for present level, 1.00-1.99=bad, 2.00 to 2.99= below average, 3.00 to 3.99=good, 4.00 to 4.99= very good,5.00=excellent and (c) for lacks, .01 to .99=low, 1.00 to 1.99 = rather big, above 2.00 to 2.99= huge, 3.00 and above=very huge.



The mean scores for target level and present level in Table 8 were analysed by calculating the average of the mean scores of teacher's questionnaire survey and interview, and students' questionnaire survey and interview. For example, the mean scores for variable 1 in the students' questionnaire survey and interview were 1.07, and 1.13 respectively, and the average of the two is 1.10. The mean scores of variable 1 in teachers' questionnaire survey and interview were 1.35 and 1.13 respectively, and average of the two is 1.24. The average of 1.10 (average of students questionnaire survey and interview) and 1.24 (average of teachers' questionnaire survey and interview) is 1.16, which is shown as the mean score of present level of students for variable 1 in the table. Similarly, for the target level of the same variable, the average of the mean scores of students' questionnaire survey and interview and teachers' questionnaire survey and interview were calculated. The mean for item 1 in the students' questionnaire survey and interview were 3.37 and 3.35 respectively; the average of the two is 3.36. The mean scores of the item in teachers' questionnaire survey and interview were 3.26 and 3.34, and the average of the two is 3.30. The average of 3.36 (average of the mean scores of students' questionnaire survey and interview) and 3.30 (average of the mean scores of teachers' questionnaire survey and interview) is 3.33, which appears as the mean score for target level in the table. The lack has been calculated by using the formula, target level—present level = lack. For variable 1, it is 3.33— 1.16= 2.17. The data is presented in a synthesized form in Table 8 below:

<b>Table 8</b>				
<b>Reading Competence needed for English Department</b>				
Sl. No.	Question/Statement	Target Needs	Present Level	Lacks
1	Reading prescribed literary texts	3.33	1.16	2.17
2	Reading literary criticism	3.68	1.35	2.33
3	Reading journals	3.62	1.87	1.75
4	Understanding unfamiliar words and expressions in texts	3.65	1.14	2.51
5	Guessing meaning of words from context	3.48	1.63	1.85
6	Understanding literal (denotative) and figurative (connotative) meanings of words	3.72	1.60	2.12
7	Interpreting figurative expressions	3.99	1.21	2.44



8	Reacting to sensory images	3.63	1.61	2.02
9	Understanding long sentences	3.10	1.52	1.58
10	Understanding shifts and transitions of ideas in a text	3.39	1.61	1.78
11	Understanding gist	3.29	1.47	1.82
12	Understanding mood, tone and purpose in a text	3.32	1.42	1.90
13	Critical appreciation and evaluation	3.45	1.39	2.06
14	Interpreting texts	3.64	1.44	2.20
15	Making Inferences from text	3.61	1.61	2.00
16	Understanding text organization	3.61	1.61	2.00
17	Understanding aspects of style	3.24	1.65	1.59
18	Understanding different genres of writing e.g. poetry, drama, fiction etc.	3.38	1.47	1.91
19	Reference skills such as dictionary, index, notes etc.	3.13	1.47	1.66

*N.B. The lowest value on the rating scale is 1 and the highest is 5.*

*Source: Tasmin (2001)*

The required level, present level, and lack for the items, respectively, are: (1) reading literary texts-3.33 ( high) required, 1.16 (bad), and 2.17(huge); (2) reading literary criticism 3.68 (close to very high), 1.35(bad), and 2.33 (huge); (3) reading journals 3.62 (close to very high), 1.87 (bad), and 1.75 (rather big); (4) understanding unfamiliar words and expressions in texts 3.65 (close to very often or very high), 1.14 (bad), and 2.51 (huge); (5) guessing word meanings from contexts 3.48 (high), 1.63 (bad), and 1.85 (rather big); (6) understanding denotative and connotative meanings 3.72 (close to very high), 1.60 (bad), and 2.12 (huge); (7) interpreting figurative expressions 3.99 (close to very high), 1.21(bad), and 2.44 (huge); (8) reacting to sensory images 3.63 (close to very high), 1.61 (bad), and 2.02 (huge); (9) understanding long sentences 3.63 (close to very high), 1.61(bad), and 1.58 (rather big); (10) understanding shifts and transitions in texts 3.10(high), 1.52 (bad), and 1.78 (rather big); (11) understanding gist 3.29 (high), 1.47(bad), and 1.82 (rather big); (12) understanding mood, tone and purpose in a text 3.32 (high), 1.42 (bad), and 1.90 (rather big); (13) critical appreciation of texts 3.45 (high) , 1.39 (bad), and 2.06 (huge); (14) interpreting texts 3.64 (close to very high), 1.44 (bad) ,and 2.20 (huge); (15) making inferences from texts 3.61 (close to very high), 1.61 (bad), and 2.00 (huge); (16) understanding text organization 3.61 (close to very high), 1.61 (bad), and 2.00 (huge); (17) understanding aspects of

style 3.24 (high), 1.65 (bad), and 1.59 (rather big); (18) understanding different genres of writing 3.38 (high), 1.47 (bad), and 1.91 (rather); and (19) reference skills 3.13 (close to very high), 1.47 (bad), and 1.66 (rather big).

### **Required Level of Reading as found in Haque's (2006) Study:**

The level of reading for university textbooks are upper-intermediate in Science, Social Science, and Business departments, especially in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Honours levels. Words are not very unfamiliar, and sentences are not too long. However, there are some technical terms that can be challenging. Reading texts of the social science faculty are of an advanced level. They contain many unfamiliar words and expressions, and many technical terms. Sentences are often very long. Text/reference books of Law and English are of a fairly advanced level. There are too many difficult/unfamiliar words and expressions, technical terms and culturally loaded and emotionally charged language in literary texts.

### **Level of Reading up to Class XII:**

Level of reading up to class XII is also of intermediate level. There are many words and expressions that are fairly advanced; many others are of upper-intermediate level. The sentences are quite long, complex, and sophisticated. But the readings are mostly of general type, not EAP type. There is a good deal of variety; some topics relate to medical science, some to environmental science, culture, language and other social issues, but strictly speaking, they are more of general type texts, than focusing on topics or areas of different specific academic disciplines.

### **Lack between the level of reading up to class XII and the level required for higher education:**

There is not a significant lack between the levels of reading done in classes XI-XII and the level of reading required for university education. The level of the XI-XII book is intermediate and that of the university level for most subjects ranges from upper intermediate to advanced. There is some challenge, but the challenge is manageable, an  $i+1$  [  $i$  stands for the learners' present level, and 1 stands for a little higher than the present level. It is also called 'comprehensible input' type challenge. However, in some subjects, for example, English and Law, the required level of English is very advanced, and so it offers a big challenge for learners. So any student who read English textbooks up to class XII, and did not depend solely on guide books, should not face much difficulty in reading their university text/reference books in English, except in some special cases, like law and literature, and some social science departments.



## The Sub-skills of Reading Required for University Education and the Sub-skills Covered up to class XII:

### 1) Sub-skills required for university education:

For reading university textbooks in different disciplines, students need to have proficiency at both the lower and higher order sub-skills as shown in the list below:

#### a) Lower order sub-skills:

i) Understand written expression; ii) reading with appropriate speed; iii) reading for specific information; iv) reading for specific information (scanning); v) reading for gist, details or general comprehension (skimming); vi) consulting dictionary for word meanings

#### b) Higher order sub-skills:

i) Predicting about the text; ii) guessing word meanings by using contextual clues; iii) inferring from text; iv) interpreting text; v) critically evaluating texts; vi) giving personal response to texts; vii) relating textual information to the world, to personal experience(s); viii) distinguishing facts from opinions; ix) surveying text organization (finding coherence of texts and cohesion of ideas); x) transferring information from tables and graphs to texts and vice versa; xi) understanding the author's position, and attitude; xii) understanding tone and mood in a piece of writing. (Nuttal, 1942; Willams, 1984; Grellet, Harmer, 1986 among others)

### 2) Sub-skills of reading covered up to class XII:

The English syllabus mentions both the lower and higher order sub-skills. For the reading section, the H.S.C. English syllabus, for example, states:

**"Students should be able to:**

- a) Understand (i) written expression, ii) narrative texts, iii) descriptive texts, iv) argumentative texts, (v) formal and informal letters, vi) authentic texts adapted where necessary taken from newspapers and brochures and vii) appropriately selected and, if necessary, adapted literary texts.
- b) Using such written reference sources as (i) indexes, ii) tables of contents, iii) dictionaries, and iv) general reference works related to other subjects of study at this level.
- c) Read exclusively with appropriate speed.
- d) i) skim for gist, scan for specific information, iii) infer the meanings of words

- from their context, iv) recognize topic sentences, v) distinguish fact from opinion, vi) detect appropriate inferential meaning, vii) draw appropriate conclusions, and viii) recognize the significance of such cohesive devices as linking words and reference words.
- e) Recognize the functions of different punctuation and graphological devices. "

(NCTB English Syllabus for XI-XII, 1996:137-138)

However, in the Higher Secondary English textbook, in classroom teaching and testing (H.S.C. Examination) lower order sub-skills are emphasized. The sub-skills covered in the tests and classrooms are: matching words with their meanings, answering specific information of lift-out type, matching information provided in two columns, reading close, giving a title to a passage, and understanding main idea. Hence, there is a gap; students find it difficult to tackle the higher order sub-skills of reading in their university textbooks.

### A Recent Survey with 1st year Honours Students:

A survey was conducted with sixty five students from five different faculties of Rajshahi University to find out about the amount of reading they have to do in English, and the difficulties, if any, they have with reading university text books. (For details about sampling for the study see Appendix 2)

**Table 10**

**Results:**

Table 10 below presents the results of the survey:

Questions	Arts	Sciences	S. Science	Busi-ess	Life and Earth	Law
What percentage of text/reference books is in English? a) less than 30%, b) 30-50% c) 50-70% d) above 70%	d=100 %	d=100 %	d=100 %	d=100 %	d=100 %	D=100 %
What percentage of your text/reference books are in Bangla? a) less than 30%, b) 30-50% c) 50-70% d) above 70%	a=100 %	a=100 %	a=100 %	a=100 %	a=100 %	A=100 %



Do you find your university text/reference books difficult to understand? a) not so difficult b) difficult, c) very difficult	b=100 %	a=100 %	b=100 %	a=100 %	a=100 %	B=100 %
Do you find your university text/reference books difficult to understand? a) not so difficult b) difficult, c) very difficult	a=25% b=50% c=25%	a=75% b=25%	a=80% b=20%	a=75% b=25%	a=75% b=25%	a=20% b=50% c=30%
Do you find technical words that are difficult to understand? a) some b) many c) too many	a=25% b=50% c=25%	a=100 %	a=25% b=75%	a=25% b=75%	a=100 %	a=20% b=60% c=20%
Do you find long sentences that are difficult for you to understand? a) some b) many c) too many	b=75% c=25%	a=100 %	b=75% c=25%	a=100 %	a=100 %	b=80% c=20%
How long does it usually take for you to read a page of your text/reference books in English? a) 15-20 minutes 20-30 minutes c) more than 30 minutes	a=25% b=50% c=25%	b=100 %	a=20% b=50% c=30%	b=100 %	b=100 %	a=20% b=50% c=30%
Do you think the English text books that you read up to class XII prepared you for reading your university text/reference books a) very little b) to some extent c) quite well	b=75% a=25%	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	B=100 %
Do you think it would have been more useful if the English textbooks contained some topics from your subject area? a) no b) a little c) very much	b=75% a=25%	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	B=100 %
Do you think if there had been more reading for you from class I to Class XII, you would have been much more competent in reading your university text/reference books? a) no b) to some extent c) a lot	b=75% a=25%	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	b=100 %	B=100 %

Note: The letters in columns 2, 3,4,5,6, and 7 refer to the options given to the students below each question in column 1 and the percentage shown against the letters is the percentage of responses for each option

For question 1, all the respondents say that more than 70% of their text/reference books are in English.

For question 2, all the respondents say that less than 30% of their books are in Bangla. In fact respondents from some departments, for example English, said that all their books are in English

For question 3, all respondents from Arts, Social Science and Law faculties say that they find their text/reference books difficult, but respondents from Science, Business, and Life and Earth Faculties say that their text/reference books are not so difficult.

For question 4, a large number of students from different faculties she that they find their textbooks difficult to understand because of their difficulty in reading English, though some students say that they do not find it so difficult.

In response to question 5 and 6, a high percentage of students say that they find many unfamiliar technical words and too many long, complex and involved sentences in their text/reference books, which prove difficult for them.

Responses to question. 7 show that students have slow speed in reading; most of them take about 30 minutes to read a page of their text books, but it should not take more than 15/20 minutes. Most students feel that if there were more reading, and reading of different subject related EAP type texts, it would have been more useful for them (responses to questions 8, 9 and 10).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations:**

Thus it is seen that there is a big lack between the amount of reading students have done up to class XII and the amount of reading they are required to do for their undergraduate programs in different subjects under different faculties. As students do a small amount of reading (only 42 pages a year) up to class XII, their reading speed is slow, and so they find it difficult to manage the extensive of reading they are required to do (1406 pages a year) at the university level. However there should not be any major problem with the level of English, as there is no big lack between the levels of English in English text books up to class XII and that of the undergraduate text books, only except in the case of text books of English and Law. The level of university text books do not prove 'so difficult' for students, it seems within i+1 level of difficulty, for those who read English text books up to class XII. However, the fact is, a large majority of the students do not read the English text books. They depend only on the guide/note



books, and so they find it difficult to read their university text/reference books in English.

Their fun, as far as the purpose of preparing learners for reading university textbooks are concerned, the level of English in the English textbooks up to class XII, especially XI-XII textbook, is adequate, but the amount of reading must be increased, as the respondents of the study indicate. Also some EAP type texts should be included in class IX - XII English text books to prepare learners for different specific areas of study at the undergraduate level.

English for both general and specific purposes, especially EAP, should be covered in English textbooks up to class XII. The pre-university level English programme may be divided into three stages: Stage 1 (Classes I -VIII) should focus mainly on EGP, or basic skills, including, vocabulary, basic grammar, notions, functions, the major skills and their sub-skills; stage 2 (classes IX-X), should have about 30-40% EAP and 60-70% EGP texts; and stage 3 (classes XI- XII) should have 60 to 70% EAP materials, and the rest; EGP materials; Additional reading materials of both EGP and EAP type texts as rapid readers may also be used from class IX to minimize the lack between the amount of reading covered in pre-university courses and required for university courses.

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## Appendix 1

For syllabus analysis, the syllabus of the following departments were examined:

### 1. Dhaka University:

- a) Faculty of Arts: English, History, Islamic History and Culture, Philosophy
- b) Faculty of Science: Economics, Sociology, Political Science,
- c) Faculty of Law: Department of law and Justice
- d) Business Administration: Accounting, Management Studies, Marketing
- e) Science: Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics, Computer Science.

### 2. Rajshahi University:

- a) Faculty of Arts: English, Bengali, History, Islamic History and Culture, Philosophy, Language, Islamic studies, Arabic.
- b) Faculty of Social Science: Economics, Sociology, Social Work, Political Science, Public Administration, Mass Communication, Anthropology
- c) Faculty of Law: Department of Law and Justice
- d) Faculty of Business Administration: Accounting, Management, Finance and Banking, Marketing, Institute of Business Administration (Only MBA Program offered)



- e) Science Faculty: Physics, Applied Chemistry, Bio-Chemistry and Molecular Biology, Mathematics, Computer Science and technology, Statistics, Information and communication Technology, Botany, Zoology, Geography and Environmental Sciences, Fisheries and Aqua Culture, Population Science and Human Resource Development, Genetics and Breeding,

**3. Agriculture University:**

- a) Agriculture Faculty: Agronomy, Horticulture,
- b) Veterinany Science faculty: Surgery and Obstetrics, Pharmacology and Hygiene,
- c) Agricultural Engineering and Technology: Food Technology and Rural Industries
- d) Agricultural Economics Faculty: Agricultural Economics

**4. Govt. Azizul Haque College:**

- a) Arts Faculty: English, History, Philosophy, Islamic History and Culture
- b) Social Science Faculty: Economics, Sociology, Political Science
- c) Business Studies Faculty: Accounting, Management
- d) Science faculty: Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Geography

**5. Govt. Edward College, Pabna:**

- a) Arts Faculty: English, History, Philosophy, Islamic History and Culture
- b) Social Science Faculty: Economics, Sociology, Political Science
- c) Business Studies Faculty: Accounting, Management
- d) Science Faculty: Physics, Chemistry, Botany

For seminar library information, in addition to the departments of the five institutions mentioned above, the following departments of BUET were also surveyed:

1. Civil Engineering Faculty: Civil Engineering, Water Resources Engineering,
2. Architecture and Planning: Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning
3. Electrical and Electronic Engineering: Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering
4. Mechanical Engineering: Mechanical Engineering, Industrial Production Engineering, Naval architecture and marine Engineering.
5. Chemical Engineering: Chemical Engineering, Metallurgical Engineering

## Appendix 2

Sampling:

The table below shows the detailed sampling plan for the survey:

<b>Table 9</b>			
<b>Sampling Plan for the survey</b>			
<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Departments</b>	<b>No of students</b>	<b>Total</b>
Arts	English	08	08
Science	Applied Physics	03	15
	Physics	03	
	Bio-Chemistry	03	
	ICE	03	
	Chemistry	03	
Business Faculty	Management	03	12
	Finance	03	
	Accounting	03	
	Marketing	03	
Social Science	Sociology	02	10
	Economics	02	
	Mass Communication	02	
	Public Administration	02	
	Anthropology	02	
Life and Earth	Botany	03	12
	Zoology	03	
	Population Science	03	
	Genetics and Breeding	03	
Law	Law	08	08
6 Faculties	21	65	65



**Appendix-3**  
**Questionnaire**

**Instruction:** This questionnaire is meant for collecting data for a research paper. Your co-operation will be highly appreciated. All information will be strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. M. Shahidullah  
 Professor, Department of English  
 Rajshahi University

**Part-A**

Name: -----

Department:-----

University/College:-----

Level of Study: First year/ 2nd year ( Tick as appropriate)

**Part-B**

N.B. For each question, some options are provided. Please tick only one that you consider most appropriate for each question.

1. What percentage of text/reference books is in English?  
 a) less than 30%, b) 30-50% c) 50-70% d) above 70%
2. What percentage of your text/reference books are in Bangla?  
 a) less than 30%, b) 30-50% c) 50-70% d) above 70%
3. Do you find your university text/reference books difficult to understand?  
 a) not so difficult b) difficult, c) very difficult
4. How many unfamiliar (difficult) words you find (on an average) in a page of your text/reference books?  
 a) less than 20 b) 20-30, c) 30-40, d) Above 40
5. Do you find technical words that are difficult to understand?  
 a) some b) many c) too many

6. Do you find long sentences that are difficult for you to understand?  
a) some b) many c) too many
7. How long does it usually take for you to read a page of your text/reference books in English?  
a) 15-20 minutes b) 20-30 minutes c) more than 30 minutes
8. Do you think the English text books that you read up to class XII prepared you for reading your university text/reference books  
a) very little b) to some extent c) quite well
9. Do you think it would have been more useful if the English textbooks contained some topics from your subject area?  
a) no b) a little c) very much
10. Do you think if there had been more reading for you from class I to Class XII, you would have been much more competent in reading your university text/reference books?  
a) no b) to some extent c) a lot